

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 MCT-01 DHA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-13 ACDA-10

AID-05 /120 W

-----161357Z 109327 /40

R 161010Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3928

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

UNCLAS CAIRO 6369

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EG LY

SUBJ: GOE'S BENGHAZI STAFF RETURNS; LIBYAN DIPLOMATS NOW FREE TO
DEPART

REF: CAIRO 6349

1. CAIRO PRESS, WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY NOT ANNOUNCED
BAN ON LIBYAN DIPLOMATS LEAVING EGYPT NOR STATUS OF
EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS IN BENGHAZI (REFTEL), ON APRIL 16
REPORTS EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS NOW ARRIVED IN CAIRO AND
LIBYANS CONSEQUENTLY PERMITTED DEPART EGYPT.
AHAM BANNER: "QADHAFI RETREATS, RELEASES EGYPTIAN
STAFF IN BENGHAZI."

2. AHAM PROVIDES "STIRRING DETAILS": AFTER DETAINING
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BENGHAZI CONSULATE STAFF FOR SEVEN DAYS IN A HOTEL,
RANSACKING CONSULATE AND OCCUPYING IT, LIBYAN AUTHORITIES
ON APR 15 RELEASED ALL 16 EGYPTIAN EMPLOYEES AND THEIR
11 DEPENDENTS. PAPER ATTRIBUTES QADHAFI'S RETREAT FROM
"AGGRESSIVE METHODS" TO FURIOUS REACTION OF PEOPLE OF
ALEXANDRIA WHO HAD TO BE RESTRAINED BY POLICE FROM
TREATING LIBYAN CONSULATE THERE IN SAME MANNER.

(SEE ALEXANDRIA 261). AHAM SAYS
LIBYAN DIPLOMATS WERE PROTECTED BY PLACING THEM UNDER
GUARD IN AN ALEX HOTEL. AT THIS POINT, AHAM'S
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR "LEARNS," QADHAFI QUICKLY REQUESTED
GOE TO AGREE TO: (A) ALLOW LIBYANS TO LEAVE ALEX;
(B) ALLOW LIBYAN AMB VISIT CONSULAR STAFF IN ALEX
HOTEL. IN RETURN, QADHAFI PROMISED ALL EGYPTIAN
DIPLOMATS WOULD BE ALLOWD LEAVE BENGHAZI.
MFA AGREED, AND AS SOON AS EGYPTIAN DIPLOMATS ARRIVED
IN CAIRO, LIBYANS WERE INFORMED THEY FREE TO LEAVE.

3. AHAM EMPHASIZES THAT TREATMENT OF BENGHAZI CONSULATE
WAS IN VIOLATION OF VIENNA CONVENTION: PROPERTY AND
MONEY WAS SEIZED, LIBYANS CONVERTED BUILDING INTO STRONGHOLD
OF "YOUTH OF APR 7," AND DIP PLATES REPLACED ON
CONSULAR CARS. (COMMENT: EGYPT ADHERES
TO VIENNA CONVENTION, BUT OUR RECORDS DO NOT SHOW THAT
LIBYA HAS FORMALLY ACCEDED TO IT.)

4. GOE WILL ON APR 16 SUBMIT NOTE TO ARAB LEAGUE "EXPLAINING"
THAT DETERIORATION IN BILATERAL RELATIONS RESULTED FROM QADHAFI
DECISION TO ENGAGE IN "SABOTAGE" IN EGYPTIAN CITIES AND TO HARRASS
EGYPTIAN WORKERS IN LIBYA. (AHAM) EGYPTIAN NOTE REPORTEDLY RESPONSE
BOTH TO EARLIER LIBYAN COMPLAINT TO ARAB LEAGUE ABOUT EGYPT
AND SECOND LIBYAN COMMUNICATION REQUESTING ARAB LEAGUE
HQ BE TRANSFERRED OUT OF CAIRO.

5. COMMENTARY. REPORTING IN MEDIA AGAIN NOTES LIBYAN
POPULAR ANGER AGAINST QADHAFI "SWEPT" THE COUNTRY (LIBYA)
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WHEN HE CRITICIZED SOME OF ISLAMIC TEACHINGS AND "ATTACKED"
KORAN AND ISLAMIC TRADITIONS. (AKHBAR HAD REPORTED QADHAFI ACTUALLY
ARRESTED SOME SENUSSI SHAYKHS AT KUFRA). EDITORIALS CONTINUE
SUGGEST REVOLUTION IS AT HAND. AHAM, FOR EXAMPLE,
OBSERVES "TOPPLING QADHAFI IS NOW MATTER OF TIME, BUT
CREDIT FOR THE ACT SHOULD NOT GO TO EGYPT OR ANY OTHER
COUNTRY; IT SHOULD GO TO THE LIBYAN PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE
MOST INTEREST IN ENDING THE QADHAFI NIGHTMARE."
EILTS

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